DOE News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 17, 2005

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Howe named director for Center for Space Nuclear Research

Dr. Steven Howe has been appointed the first director of the Center for Space Nuclear Research (CSNR).

Located in Idaho Falls, the CSNR is operated by the Universities Space Research Association (USRA) in collaboration with Idaho National Laboratory (INL). Dr. David Black, USRA's president, announced the selection. "He is highly respected by the research community," Black said. "He is articulate and passionate about the value of space power and propulsion for the nation's space exploration program. I am confident that Steven will be an outstanding founding director for this important new center."

Howe is currently a staff member in the Thermonuclear Applications group of the Applied Physics Division at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. His undergraduate and graduate work was in nuclear engineering at Kansas State University (bachelor's degree, 1975; doctorate, 1980), with his thesis research being performed at the Los Alamos Meson Physics Facility.

Howe's research interests include antiproton physics and applications, nuclear rocket propulsion, hyper-velocity aerodynamics and thermodynamics, and nonequilibrium X-ray emission. He has published over 50 reports in the open literature, as well as nine classified reports. In addition, Howe is a fiction writer, having published the novella, "Wrench and Claw," in Analog Magazine and the novel, "Honor Bound Honor Born," which detailed the possible development of the first commercial base on the moon.

He has also appeared in numerous television programs about space and rocketry. His television credits include "Living and Working in Space," PBS and Sci-Fi Channel; "Mission to Mars," Ultra Science, the Learning Channel; "Rocketships," Discovery Channel (June '98); "Rockets in Space," Wingspan (August '98); and "Voyage to the Milky Way," PBS, May '99.

Howe holds five patents involving the storage and application of antiprotons, and he is the co-founder of Hbar Technologies, headquartered near Chicago.

Howe has served on a number of national committees, the most recent being the National Academy of Sciences Committee on "Space Missions Enabled by Nuclear Propulsion."

The CSNR will be a focus for engaging university scientists in research and development of advanced space nuclear systems including space power and propulsion systems and radioisotope power generators. CSNR will create opportunities for university researchers to collaborate with their counterparts at NASA, INL and other Department of Energy labs, and industry in projects and initiatives to advance nuclear technologies for space exploration and other space applications.

The CSNR's research program will cover both nuclear and non-nuclear elements and related subdisciplines such as materials, nucleonics, heat transfer, thermofluidynamics, structures, systems engineering, testing and diagnostics.

The center will also establish and conduct a multidisciplinary education program (in studies of space nuclear systems and related scientific and technical areas) that uses a mix of classroom and research activities.

More information on CSNR: http://csnr.usra.edu

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